

# Katrina Response: Daily Message Points

## September 5, 2005

### RED CROSS

The Red Cross currently has **356 shelters** open in **9 states** assisting the thousands of citizens displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

### LOUISIANA NATIONAL GUARD

#### **National Guard on Scene After Hurricane Katrina**

Units from across the nation have descended on Louisiana and Mississippi in response to Hurricane Katrina as part of the **unprecedented call-up of National Guard** forces for a natural disaster

More than **12,000 Guardsmen are operating** in the devastated areas

- combing the flooded streets of New Orleans for victims
- pulling survivors from the rooftops of buildings by helicopter
- handing out supplies

An additional **4,000 National Guardsmen** are expected to arrive by **Tuesday**

In Louisiana alone more than **49,000 people are living in shelters** around the state

- Another **47,000 have been moved out of state** to temporary housing

Preliminary numbers indicate Task Force Pelican have **already distributed**

- more than **620,000** bottles of water
- more than **320,000** meals
- **20 points of distribution** set up manned by National Guardsmen, Texas Forestry Service, and parish volunteers

## **STATE of LOUISIANA**

### **Hurricane Katrina Hotline: 1-866-334-8305**

State of Louisiana working with Louisiana Voluntary Organizations Active to coordinate donations of goods and services with agencies that are able to receive, store, and distribute donated items

Please call **1-866-334-8305 to donate goods** and services

The following items are needed:

- MRE's, canned goods, non-perishable food items, baby supplies, mosquito repellants, bleach and other cleaning supplies, cases of bottled water, toiletries, individually boxed juice, individually wrapped snacks, rubber and heavy duty work gloves, dust masks, plastic utensils, and paper plates

### **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HOSPITALS**

- An initial number of fatalities has been announced at **59 related to the hurricane** has been announced at 59 deaths
  - This number will be updated as often as possible when deaths are determined to be storm-related
- A Family Assistance Center is being planned for family members who have lost loved ones as a result of Hurricane Katrina
  - In the interim, a number has been established by the American Red Cross for those who believe or know they have lost a loved one due to the storm. **The number is 1-877-LOVED-1-S** (1-877-568-3317)
- DHH is grateful for the overwhelming response to the call for medical volunteers.
  - Licensed **medical personnel who wish to volunteer** should email contact information and availability to [eocpio@dhh.la.gov](mailto:eocpio@dhh.la.gov).
- DHH has established a two phone numbers for **employees of all state agencies who have been displaced**.
  - These numbers are **225-342-9345 or 225-342-9340**
  - A database will be kept of employees and information will be forwarded to appropriate agencies so the employees can be located and assisted with their needs

- The Department of Health and Hospitals reminds citizens that (according to the CDC) **widespread outbreaks of infectious disease after hurricanes are not common** in the United States.
  - o Outbreaks of rare and deadly diseases do not suddenly occur after hurricanes and floods in areas where such diseases do not naturally occur
  - o Because cholera and typhoid are not commonly found in the U.S. Gulf States area, it is very unlikely that they would occur after Hurricane Katrina
- DHH has in place a **tracking system** for unusual diseases or outbreaks in general populations or hospitals
  - o In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, this tracking system has been expanded to include general shelters, special needs shelters, field hospitals and emergency rooms
- DHH officials say there is **no need for any special immunizations** in the wake of a hurricane or other severe storm
  - o However, residents who cut or puncture themselves while cleaning up after the storm should get a tetanus shot if they have not received one in the past five years

### **DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

- The Office of Family Support has accepted nearly **90,000 emergency food stamp applications during a 60-hour time period**
  - o Lines are long but staff are working 24 hours to assist applicants in a timely manner
- Because some citizens are having difficulty utilizing Electronic Benefit Transfer Cards (EBT) in grocery stores, OFS is implementing a \$25 “stand-in” process.
  - o This procedure should only be used when vouchers and Point of Sale activity are not possible.
  - o This will only be available from Sept. 6 – Sept. 12, 2005.
- There are currently **50,437 displaced citizens in 85 Louisianan shelters**
  - o Shelters are also open in Alabama, Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma and Washington, DC

## **DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**

### **DOL Issuing Unemployment Insurance Checks**

DOL is providing unemployment insurance to those persons who were receiving them prior to Hurricane Katrina

If an individual lives in a zip code area of 70000-70199 or 70300-70499, and was expecting a UI benefits last week, these **checks are available**

- Checks can be picked up between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.
- Today, Sunday, through the rest of the week
- DOL Main Office, located at 1001 North 23<sup>rd</sup> Street in Baton Rouge
- For additional information or directions to this location, please contact 1-866-783-5567

**Unemployment Insurance and Disaster Unemployment Assistant claims** continue

to be taken at evacuation centers and labor offices

- across the state daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Labor is working now to get **checks delivered to the evacuees** at the various shelters around the state and around the country.

As of Sunday afternoon, the Labor Department had taken at least **30,000 UI claims**

- The total includes those taken in Louisiana, Texas and Arkansas
- The total does not include claims taken over the Internet

## **DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

### **Leak at Murphy Oil in Meraux**

- A **significant oil leak was discovered** on Sunday at Murphy Oil in Meraux during a DEQ surveillance flight
- The oil sheen **has drifted into a local neighborhood**. It has not been determined how much oil has escaped from the facility
- DEQ is trying to locate which storage tank is leaking. Murphy Oil officials are aware of the discharge but can't begin the cleanup process until they can access the area
- The exact location of the leaky storage tank is not yet known because the area is surrounded by water

DEQ continues to work with its federal and state partners on oil spill issues. There are several oil spills where cleanup is already taking place. Other oil spill locations are still inaccessible, but are continuously monitored by aerial surveillance.

### **Water Monitoring continues**

- Environmental Protection Agency **took water samples yesterday**
- DEQ has taken water in Jefferson Parish and New Orleans area
- These teams are being assisted by the Texas Commission for Environmental Quality
- Texas has also sent a mobile lab and support people. Water samples will be analyzed for pollutants and results should be ready two to three days

### **Air Sampling and Aerial Surveillance**

- EPA's special ASPECT plane has been flying over the affected areas taking air samples while the helicopter mounted Hawk camera continues to look for chemical and natural gas leaks

## **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**Call Center** staff members will continue to answer questions on **Labor Day from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

- LDE Call Center has answered approximately 4,000 phone calls from concerned parents, teachers and other school employees from around the state
- Staff members fielded around **500 phone calls** on Sunday alone
- LDE website, [www.louisianaschools.net](http://www.louisianaschools.net), is being updated daily with the latest information from school systems hit hardest by the hurricane
  - Information from Orleans, Jefferson and St. Charles and St. Tammany Parishes can also be found at that site

## **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and **DOTD completed repairs to the levee** breach at the 17th Street Canal on Sunday
- **Began pumping water out of the canal** and into the lake
- Once the canal level is drawn down about two feet, pumps at Pumping Station #6 can begin pumping water out of New Orleans on a limited capacity
- The Mounds pumping station near Interstate 10 should be back online by 2 p.m. Monday
- DOTD ferries will temporarily run from Algiers Point to Chalmette on Monday to move emergency equipment between the west and east banks of the Mississippi River

## **DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE & FISHERIES**

**Search and Rescue Operations Continue in Greater New Orleans area, as well as St. Bernard Parish, Plaquemines Parish, and the Florida parishes.**

- Estimated total persons rescued: 18,000 (includes hospital evacuations, individuals, and small group rescues.)
- **LDWF resources committed to hurricane response**
  - 500 boats
  - 400 employees (full or part-time, including enforcement agents in field, support personnel in Baton Rouge and regional offices)
  - Enforcement rescue staff: 16-hour shifts since 8/29/05

**Cooperative support (aircraft/helicopters) being provided by**

U.S Coast Guard  
LA. Air National Guard

**Cooperative assistance (watercraft) being utilized and coordinated by  
LDWF**

Association of Texas Search & Rescue  
Arkansas Game and Fish  
Bear Search & Rescue Foundation  
California Fish and Game Commission / Law Enforcement Division  
Colorado Fish and Game

Denham Springs Fire Dept.  
Dock Walk  
Idaho Search and Rescue  
Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources  
Kentucky Dept. of Fish & Wildlife  
Lafayette Law Enforcement / Search & Rescue  
Michigan EMAC  
Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources  
Missouri Dept. of Conservation / State Water Patrol  
New Jersey State Police  
New York State Emergency Management Office  
North Carolina Dept. of Natural Resources  
Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources  
Oklahoma Dept. of Wildlife Conservation  
Pennsylvania Fish and Boating Commission  
People and Paws (Wisconsin)  
South Carolina Law Enforcement  
St. Charles County RAS  
Texas Parks & Wildlife  
Tennessee Wildlife Resources  
Texas EquSearch/Dog South Search & Rescue  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Virginia Emergency Operations Center  
Zodiak Training

- **Total out-of-state support: Personnel 978 / Boats 655**

### **BOARD OF REGENTS**

- The Board of Regents is operating a staffed **information hotline** from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. daily for students needing information on their status, their opportunities to enroll elsewhere, financial aid and TOPS implications, etc.
  - o The number is **1-866-415-2269**
- There is also detailed information on our website for both students and displaced faculty (including a registry to allow campuses to learn the status and whereabouts of their displaced faculty and staff)
  - o Visit [www.regents.state.la.us](http://www.regents.state.la.us).

- BOR estimates that some **42,000 public-campus students** and about **28,000 private-campus students** have been displaced by Katrina.
- Nearly all of our campuses statewide are involved in the emergency response effort
  - o At least 11,**500 evacuees are being housed in shelters** set up at our campuses across the state
  - o In addition to the shelter totals, many of our campuses have also opened their dormitory doors to displaced students from NO-area campuses and, in some cases, even to parents of their student who are from the NO area
- BOR working with the SREB to develop upper-class courses not currently available in our electronic matrix of more than 700 courses that will allow juniors, seniors and possibly even grad students an opportunity to continue to work toward their degree via the internet
  - o Registration for these courses is expected to be available on or about **October 10**
- Colleges and universities are discussing options that will allow our campuses to more readily provide student teachers to help handle the increased student load expected as displaced K-12 students enroll in school districts around the state

## **OHSEP**

OHSEP continues coordinating the efforts of state and federal assests

- Life sustaining missions
- Search and rescue
- Security
- Movement of commodities to the affected area

## **DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION**

DOA is down to a skeleton crew at OEP and while many mundane activities are being continued they are nothing new and are, as usual, things that are in support of others who are doing the "hands on" work of storm recovery.



